



First report of the tribe Pselaphini from Xizang, with description of two new species (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Pselaphinae)

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Abstract

The tribe Pselaphini is reported to occur in Xizang, with two new species being described from Mêdog and Zayü counties: *Pselaphogenius dagmo* Zhang & Yin, **sp. nov.** and *Pselaphogenius xizangensis* Zhang & Yin, **sp. nov.** Both taxa can be readily distinguished from all East Asian congeners by their external appearances, in combination with the characteristic aedeagal structures.

Key words: taxonomy, *Pselaphogenius*, new taxa, distribution, eastern Himalaya, China

Introduction

The overall diversity of the ant-like litter beetle tribe Pselaphini (Pselaphinae: Pselaphitae) in China remains inadequately documented. The five recognized genera, which collectively comprise approximately 25 species, have been recorded predominantly from the southwestern region of the country (e.g., Kurbatov 2006; Nomura 2003, 2004; Yin & Jiang 2016), leaving a vast portion of the territory devoid of records for the group. The most species-rich of these genera, *Pselaphogenius* Reitter, is represented by 13 species distributed across Zhejiang (1), Taiwan (1), Guangdong (1), Guangxi (1), Sichuan (6), Guizhou (1), and Yunnan (2) (Löbl 1964; Nomura 2003; Zhang & Yin 2024), a pattern that implies a far more extensive range for the genus than is currently known. A recent study on the Himalayan fauna of the tribe introduced two new genera and 12 new species (Löbl & Kodada 2021), including an additional member of *Pselaphogenius* from Gandaki in central Nepal. Löbl and Kodada's work indicates that our limited knowledge of the tribe's diversity is probably an artifact of insufficient collecting efforts and minimal support for taxonomy, rather than a true faunal paucity.

In this paper, we report the first occurrence of Pselaphini in China's Xizang and describe two additional *Pselaphogenius* species from Mêdog and Zayü counties. This discovery establishes a biogeographic connection between the Himalaya and southwest China, suggesting that a considerable diversity of Pselaphini may be discovered in the future, particularly along the Himalayan montane areas extending eastward to the southeastern region of Xizang and the majestic Hengduan Mountains.

Material and methods

The material treated in this paper is deposited in the Insect Collection of Shanghai Normal University (SNUC), Shanghai, China. The label data of the material are quoted verbatim.

For morphological examination, dissected parts were mounted in Euparal on plastic slides affixed to the pin of the corresponding specimen. Habitus images were captured using a Canon EOS R5 camera equipped with a

Mitutoyo M Plan Apo 7.5× lens, illuminated by three 10W LED bulbs (5500 K). Images of fine morphological details were generated using a Canon G9 camera mounted on an Olympus CX31 microscope, employing either reflected or transmitted light. Image stacks were processed with Helicon Focus v. 8.2.0 Pro, line drawings were made in Adobe Illustrator 29.0, and the final plates were composed and edited using Adobe Photoshop CC 2020.

Measurements were recorded as follows: total body length was measured from the anterior margin of the clypeus to the abdominal apex; head length extended from the anterior clypeal margin to the cephalic base, excluding the cervical constriction; head width was measured across the eyes; pronotal length was taken along the midline, while pronotal width represents the maximum transverse dimension; elytral length was measured along the sutural line; elytral width is the maximum width across both elytra combined; abdominal length corresponds to the dorsally visible portion measured along the midline, and abdominal width is the maximum transverse dimension. The descriptive terminology employed herein follows Chandler (2001) and Yin (2022). Abdominal sclerites are designated with both Arabic numerals, indicating the visible segment (e.g., tergite 1, sternite 1), and Roman numerals, denoting the true morphological segment (e.g., tergite IV, sternite III). Descriptions of paired appendages are presented in the singular.

Taxonomy

Pselaphogenius dagmo Zhang & Yin, sp. nov.

(Figs 1, 3A, B)

Type material. HOLOTYPE: CHINA: ♂: ‘China: Xizang, Mêdog County, Dagmo To., nr. G219/G559 cross, 29°28'54"N, 95°27'2"E, 1300 m, 11.viii.24, Yin et al. leg., 达木乡近G219/G559口’ (SNUC).

Diagnosis. *Male.* Body elongate, length approximately 1.9 mm; dorsal vestiture of scattered, long, arcuate setae. Head longer than wide (length/width approximately 1.3); vertexal foveae narrowly separated. Maxillary palpomere 4 slightly shorter than head. Eyes each composed of approximately 15 ommatidia. Pronotum with punctiform lateral antebasal foveae; disc with large, sparse punctation. Each elytron with three distinct basal foveae. Elytra wider than long (length/width approximately 0.7). Aedeagus dorsoventrally symmetric; endophallus with two short internal sclerites; parameres each with four apical macrosetae.

Description. *Male.* Body (Fig. 1A) 1.88 mm in length; color reddish brown, with tarsi and mouthparts paler. Dorsal vestiture of long, sparse, arcuate setae.

Head (Fig. 1B) sub-ovoid, much longer than wide, length 0.44 mm, width across eyes 0.33 mm, length/width 1.33; moderately depressed posteromedially, with large, setose, and narrowly separated vertexal foveae (dorsal tentorial pits); tempora slightly shorter than eyes, convergent posteriorly; frons produced anteriorly as distinct rostrum, bearing broad, median longitudinal groove; anterior portion of groove with dense, golden setae; groove convergent posteriorly, extending to apical portion of vertex; lateral carinae of median groove divergent anteriorly; clypeus short, sharply declivitous, with anterior margin carinate and strongly raised; postantennal impressions present. Eyes prominent, each with approximately 15 ommatidia. Gular foveae (posterior tentorial pits) broadly separated, located in wide transverse groove; submental projection (‘gular mound’ *sensu* Owens & Carlton 2022) short, transverse, and strongly prominent; area posterior to projection distinctly concave and densely setose. Maxillary palpus (Fig. 1C) long and slender; palpomere 1 tubular, arcuate, and narrow; 2 elongate, narrow in basal 2/3, distally expanded; 3 short, subtriangular; 4 longest, weakly thickened in basal 1/5, slender medially, then strongly expanded and securiform in apical 3/4, with slightly notched apex and distinct palpal cone. Antenna 1.14 mm in length, club (Fig. 1D) loosely formed by three enlarged apical antennomeres; antennomere 1 subcylindrical, elongate and robust; 2 short and robust; 3–8 moniliform; 9–11 large, elongate; 9 slightly larger than 10; 11 largest, suboval, unnoticeably longer than 9 and 10 combined (13:12).

Pronotum (Fig. 1B) slightly longer than wide (length 0.39 mm, width 0.36 mm), widest slightly anterior to middle, sides convergent anteriorly and posteriorly; disc moderately convex, coarsely punctate, with few long, thickened setae; mediobasal region broadly impressed, with punctiform lateral antebasal foveae; basal collar coarsely rugose. Prosternum with basisternal (precoxal) portion longer than procoxal rests; lateral procoxal foveae small and well-separated. Hypomera lacking grooves, impressions and ridges, completely fused with prosternum.

Elytra subtriangular, much wider than long, length 0.47 mm, width 0.69 mm, length/width 0.68, constricted at bases; each elytron with three large, asetose basal foveae; inner two foveae proximate; sutural striae complete and broadly arcuate; outer discal striae more strongly curved than inner striae, both moderately carinate and extending to approximately 3/4 of elytral length; posterior elytral margin with dense band of golden setae; humeri flattened, lacking subhumeral foveae and marginal striae; posterolateral margins obtusely angulate. Metathoracic wings absent.

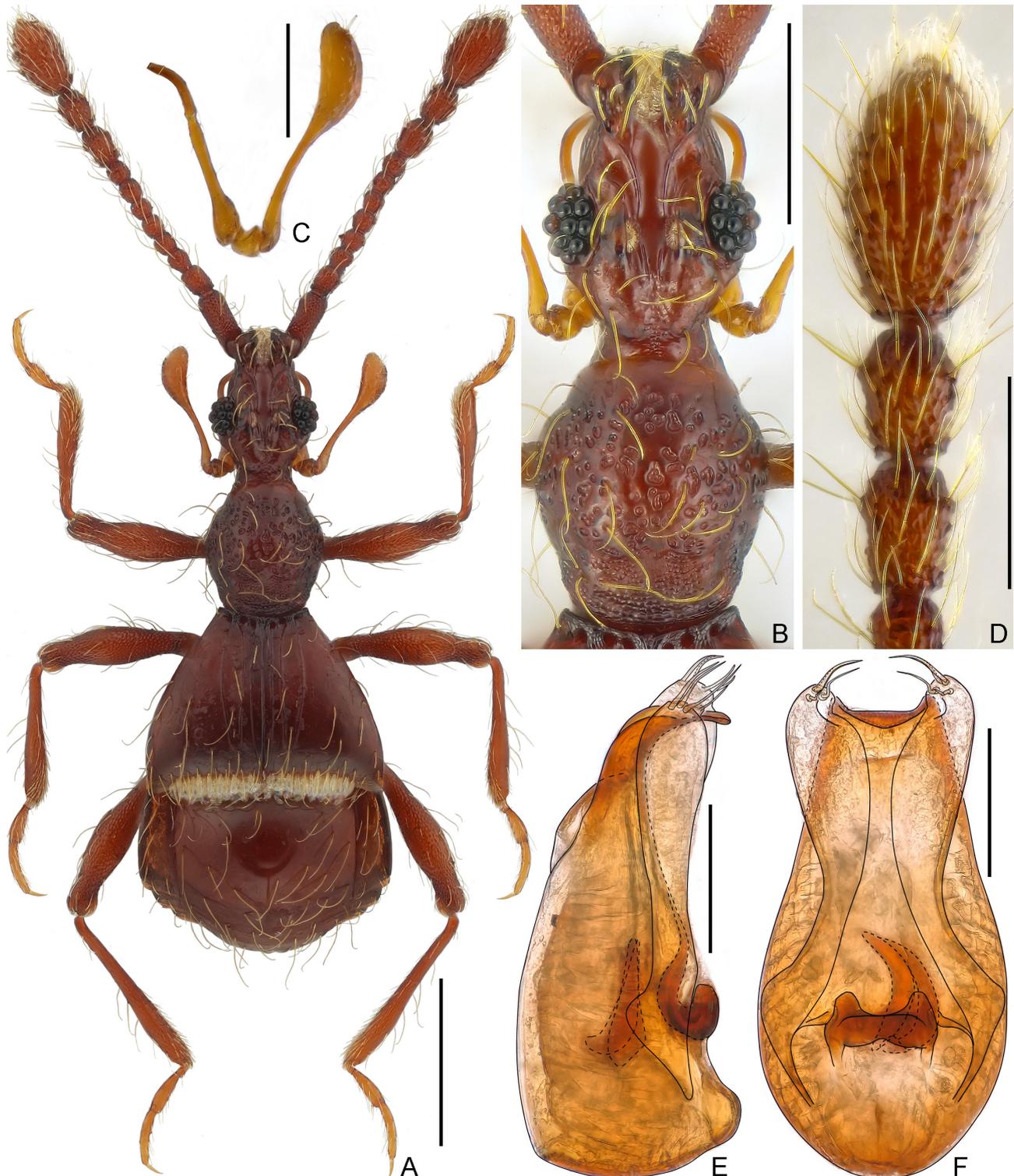


FIGURE 1. *Pselaphogenius dagmo* sp. nov., male. **A.** Dorsal habitus. **B.** Head and pronotum. **C.** Maxillary palpus. **D.** Antennal club. **E, F.** Aedeagus, lateral (E) and ventral (F). Scale bars: 0.5 mm in A; 0.3 mm in B; 0.2 mm in C, D; 0.1 mm in E, F.

Mesoventrite short, laterally fused with metaventrite, afoveate; median portion with broad longitudinal ridge, flanked by large, transverse, setose sockets; prepectus massive and collar-like; mesoventral intercoxal process short and apically truncate. Metaventrite afoveate, medially weakly raised posterior to mesocoxal cavities, with oblique grooves adjacent to posterolateral margins of mesocoxal cavities; metaventral intercoxal process broad, with posterior margin nearly straight.

Legs elongate; tibiae nearly straight, slightly expanded apically.

Abdomen broadest at lateral margins of tergite 1 (IV), length 0.58 mm, width 0.76 mm. Tergite 1 (IV) longest, much longer than tergites 2 (V) to 4 (VII) combined, with broad, deep and densely setose basal sulcus, lacking foveae and carinae; 2 (V) and 3 (VI) each short, lacking foveae; 4 (VII) slightly shorter than 2 and 3 combined, with pair of minute basolateral foveae; 5 (VIII) transverse, narrowed posteriorly, with apical margin weakly emarginate medially and pair of minute basolateral pits. Sternite 2 (IV) with broad, densely setose basal sulcus; 3 (V) to 5 (VII) medially short and afoveate; 6 (VIII) transverse, with posterior margin convex medially; 7 (IX) reduced.

Aedeagus (Fig. 1E, F) 0.34 mm in length, moderately sclerotized and dorso-ventrally symmetric. Median lobe with large, extended basal capsule and ventrally curved apex; endophallus with two short, arcuate, partially overlapping sclerites; parameres extending distinctly beyond apex of median lobe, in ventral view abruptly broadened for apical halves, widest in apical 2/5 and each bearing four apical macrosetae.

Female. Unknown.

Comparative notes. This species can be rapidly distinguished from all Asian congeners by the coarsely punctate pronotal disc, combined with the unique structure of the aedeagus. The form of the pronotum is quite unusual for *Pselaphogenius* and may be indicative of a distinct generic status.

Distribution. Southwest China: Xizang (Mêdog) (Fig. 3A, B).

Etymology. The species is named after its type locality, Dagmo Town of Mêdog County. The name is a noun in apposition in the nominative case.

Pselaphogenius xizangensis Zhang & Yin, sp. nov.

(Figs 2, 3A, C)

Type material. HOLOTYPE: CHINA: ♂: ‘China: Xizang, Mêdog County, Gutang To., nr. Chamgainka Vill., 29°25’40”N, 95°40’12”E, 2150 m, 10.viii.24, Yin et al. leg., 西藏墨脱格当乡占根卡村殷子为等’ (SNUC).

PARATYPES: CHINA: 1 ♀, same collecting data as for holotype; 1 ♂, ‘China: Xizang, Mêdog County, Baibung To., forest nr. Aniqiao, 29°19’48”N, 95°10’45”E, 1120 m, 06.viii.24, Yin et al. leg., 西藏墨脱县背崩阿尼桥殷子为等’; 1 ♂, ‘China: Xizang, Zayü County, Shang Zayü, G219 nr. Songkong, 29°2’54”N, 96°32’30”E, 2200 m, 28.vii.24, Yin et al. leg., 西藏上察隅G219松孔殷子为等’; 1 ♀, ‘China: Xizang, Zayü County, Shang Zayü, nr. Rongyü Vill., 28°52’12”N, 96°40’52”E, 2000 m, 27.vii.24, Yin et al. leg., 西藏上察隅镇近荣玉村殷子为等’ (all deposited in SNUC).

Diagnosis. Male. Body elongate, length approximately 2.0 mm; dorsal vestiture of moderately long, straight setae. Head length/width approximately 1.5; vertexal foveae medially fused to form single small pit; maxillary palpomere 4 shorter than head; each eye with 20–22 ommatidia. Pronotum with small lateral antebasal foveae; disc smooth, impunctate. Elytra lacking basal foveae; length/width approximately 0.8. Aedeagus dorsoventrally symmetric; endophallic armature with two elongate sclerites and small spines; parameres each with three macrosetae at apex.

Description. Male. Body (Fig. 2A) length 1.95–2.0 mm; color red brown, tarsi and mouthparts paler. Dorsal vestiture of short, sparse setae.

Head (Fig. 2B) sub-rhombic, much longer than wide, length 0.45–0.46 mm, width across eyes 0.29–0.30 mm, length/width 1.53–1.55; vertex posteriorly moderately depressed medially, foveae (dorsal tentorial pits) fused into single small pit; tempora slightly longer than eyes, posteriorly convergent; frons forming distinct rostrum, with broad median longitudinal groove, anterior portion of groove filled with dense, golden setae, groove extending to vertexal fovea, lateral carinae of groove nearly parallel anteriorly; clypeus short, sharply descending, anterior margin carinate, greatly raised; postantennal impressions present. Eyes prominent, each with approximately 20–22 ommatidia. Gular foveae (posterior tentorial pits) moderately separated, in broad transverse impression; submental projection (gular mound) short, subrounded, greatly prominent; area posterior to projection markedly concave, densely setose.

Maxillary palpus (Fig. 2C) markedly long and slender; palpomere 1 tubular, curved, narrow; 2 elongate, narrow in basal 2/3 then distally thickened; 3 short, subtriangular; 4 longest, weakly thickened at basal 1/4, slender medially, then strongly thickened and ovate for apical 1/2, with slightly notched apex and distinct palpal cone. Antenna 1.07–1.11 mm long; club (Fig. 2D) loose, of three enlarged apical antennomeres; antennomere 1 subcylindrical, elongate, thick; 2 slightly elongate; 3–8 each submoniliform; 9–11 large, each elongate; 9 subcylindrical; 10 slightly shorter than 9; 11 largest, subconical apically, slightly longer than 9 and 10 combined (25:23).



FIGURE 2. *Pselaphogenius xizangensis* sp. nov., male. **A.** Dorsal habitus. **B.** Head and pronotum. **C.** Maxillary palpus. **D.** Antennal club. **E, F.** Aedeagus, lateral (E) and ventral (F). Scale bars: 0.5 mm in A; 0.2 mm in B–D; 0.1 mm in E, F.

Pronotum (Fig. 2B) slightly longer than wide, length 0.38 mm, width 0.34 mm, convergent anteriorly and posteriorly from broadest point (at apical 2/5); disc moderately convex, impunctate, sparsely setose; mediobasal region broadly impressed, with small lateral antebasal foveae. Prosternum with basisternal (precoxal) portion longer than procoxal rests; lateral procoxal foveae tiny, pit-like, well-separated; hypomera lacking grooves, impressions, and ridges, and completely fused with prosternum.

Elytra subtriangular, much wider than long, length 0.55–0.57 mm, width 0.70–0.72 mm, length/width 0.79, basally constricted; lacking basal foveae; sutural striae complete, slightly curved; each elytron with single, moderately carinate discal stria extending to 7/10 of elytral length; posterior margin with band of dense, golden setae. Humeri flat, lacking subhumeral foveae or marginal striae; posterolateral margins bluntly angulate. Metathoracic wings fully developed.

Mesoventrite short, laterally fused with metaventrite, lacking foveae; medially with broad longitudinal ridge, with large, transverse setose sockets lateral to ridge and thin median carina posterior to ridge; prepectus massive, collar-like; mesoventral intercoxal process short, apically acute. Metaventrite lacking foveae; at middle weakly raised posterior to coxal cavities; with oblique grooves adjacent to posterolateral margins of coxal cavities; metaventral intercoxal process broad, with nearly straight posterior margin.

Legs elongate; tibiae almost straight, slightly widened apically.

Abdomen broadest at lateral margins of tergite 1 (IV), length 0.61–0.64 mm, width 0.73–0.77 mm. Tergite 1 (IV) longest, longer than tergites 2 (V) to 4 (VII) combined; its basal sulcus broad, deep, densely setose, lacking foveae or carinae; 2 and 3 (VI) each short, lacking foveae; 4 slightly shorter than 2 and 3 combined, with pair of small basolateral foveae; 5 (VIII) transverse, its posterior margin weakly emarginate medially, with pair of tiny basolateral pits. Sternite 2 (IV) with broad, densely setose basal sulcus, lacking foveae; 3 (V) to 5 (VII) each short medially, lacking foveae; 6 (VIII) transverse, posterior margin broadly curved; 7 (IX) reduced.

Aedeagus (Fig. 2E, F) 0.32 mm in length, well sclerotized, dorsoventrally symmetric; median lobe with large, rounded basal capsule, apex of median lobe with broad, truncate median projection and pair of smaller lateral lobes, apex curved ventrally in lateral view; endophallic armature with two curved sclerites and few small spines; paramere each slightly shorter than median lobe, broadest at subbasal portion, gradually narrowing apically, with three apical macrosetae.

Female. General external morphology similar to male; each eye with approximately 19–21 ommatidia. Measurements (as for male): body length 1.81–1.83 mm, length/width of head 0.43–0.45/0.28–0.29 mm, of pronotum 0.36–0.37/0.32–0.33 mm, of elytra 0.51–0.52/0.67–0.68 mm, of abdomen 0.55–0.58/0.70–0.73 mm; antenna length 0.94–0.98 mm.

Comparative notes. This species may be readily separated from *Pselaphogenius dagmo* **sp. nov.** by its much shorter fourth maxillary palpomere, and the absence of coarse punctures on the pronotal disc. It can be further distinguished from all other congeners from East Asia and the Himalaya by the following combination of characters: the lack of elytral basal foveae, the presence of three projections at the apex of the median lobe, and a distinct endophallic armature of the aedeagus.

Distribution. Southwest China: Xizang (Médog and Zayü) (Fig. 3A, C).

Etymology. The specific epithet is a Latinized adjective referring to the Xizang Autonomous Region, where the type locality of this species is located.

Pselaphogenius sp.

(Fig. 3A, D)

Material examined. 1 ♀: 'China: Xizang, Zayü County, Shang Zayü, G219 nr. Dalezhu 29°29'31"N, 96°8'34"E, 3200 m, 28.vii.24, Yin et al. leg., 西藏上察隅G219大勒珠' (SNUC).

Measurement. *Female.* Each eye composed of approximately 20 ommatidia. Measurements: body length 1.92 mm, length/width of head 0.44/0.29 mm, pronotum 0.36/0.32 mm, elytra 0.54 /0.70 mm, abdomen 0.54/0.72 mm; antenna length 0.90 mm.

Remarks. The sole female specimen differs from females of *Pselaphogenius xizangensis* **sp. nov.** in its slightly larger body size and collection at a considerably higher elevation (3200 m) (Fig. 3A, D), suggesting it may represent a distinct, undescribed species. However, as definitive species-level identification in this genus typically relies on male characteristics, confirmation of its specific status awaits the collection and examination of an associated male.

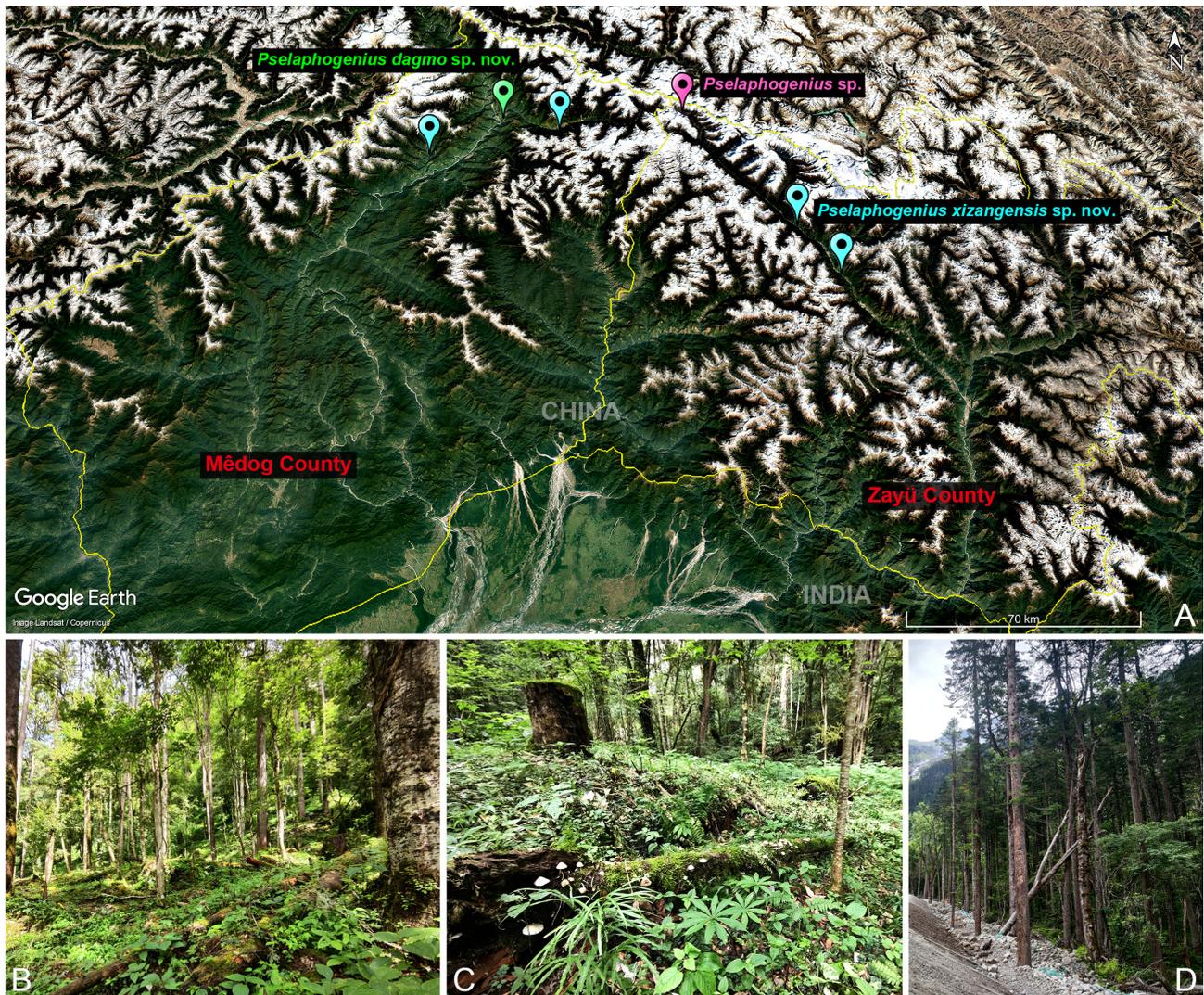


FIGURE 3. Distribution and collecting sites of *Pselaphogenius* in Xizang. **A.** Distribution of *Pselaphogenius* species in Mêdog and Zayü. **B–D.** Collecting sites of *P. dagmo* sp. nov. at Dagmo (B), *P. xizangensis* sp. nov. at Rongyü (C), and *Pselaphogenius* sp. near Dalezhu (D).

Discussion

The description of two new *Pselaphogenius* species from Mêdog and Zayü represents the first record of the tribe Pselaphini from China's Xizang Autonomous Region. This discovery extends the known distribution of the Himalayan Pselaphini eastward, establishing a biogeographic link between the fauna of the Himalaya and those of southwest China. The new finds broaden the documented distribution for the genus and supports the hypothesis that a substantial number of undiscovered species awaits discovery in the largely unexplored intervening regions.

Furthermore, the collection of an additional, potentially undescribed species, represented by a single female from a high-altitude site, reinforces the view that the current limited knowledge of the tribe in this area is an artifact of insufficient sampling rather than a true absence of diversity. Collectively, the present work indicates that southeastern Xizang and the adjacent Hengduan Mountains are likely key areas with considerable undiscovered Pselaphini diversity. Future collecting efforts in these under-explored montane regions are therefore critical to better comprehend the taxonomy, distribution, and biogeography of this and other pselaphine groups.

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西藏蚁甲族Pselaphini首报道及二新种记述（鞘翅目：隐翅虫科：蚁甲亚科）

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摘要: 首次报道西藏蚁甲族Pselaphini分布并记述二新种, 即达木衍蚁甲*Pselaphogenius dagmo* **sp. nov.**和西藏衍蚁甲*Pselaphogenius xizangensis* **sp. nov.**。新种可依据外部形态结合独特的阳茎构型与东亚其他同属物种区分。

关键词: 分类; 衍蚁甲属; 新分类单元; 分布; 东喜马拉雅; 中国